

“A Christmas Angel”

George H.W. Bush's 1958 letter to his mother.

There is about our house a need. The running, pulsating, restlessness of the four boys as they struggle to learn and grow needs a counterpart.

We need some starched, crisp frocks to go with all our torn-kneed blue jeans and helmets. We need some soft blond hair to offset those crew cuts. We need a doll house to stand firm against our forts and rackets and thousand baseball cards.

We need a legitimate Christmas angel, one who doesn't have cuts beneath the dress. We need someone who is afraid of frogs. We need someone to cry when I get mad, not argue. We need a little one who can kiss without leaving egg or jam or gum.

We need a girl.

We had one once – she would fight, cry, and play like all the rest. But there is about her a certain softness, she was patient, her hugs were just a little less wiggly.

She'd stand beside our bed until I felt her there. Silently and comfortable, she'd put those precious, fragrant locks against my chest and fall asleep. Her peace made me feel strong and so very important. 'My Daddy' had a caress, a certain ownership, which touched a slightly different spot than the 'Hi, Dad' I love so much.

But she is still with us, we need her and yet we have her. We can't touch her and yet we can feel her. We hope she will stay in our house for a long, long time.